

SENATOR WESELY: And by doing that we allow the public the chance to testify, to know what the issue is, to not have it hidden in the public hearing process. But once that public participation is achieved we allow the Legislature to pull the pieces that need to be pulled together and move forward and process the legislation we need to process. So I think the system we have in place is one that is balanced. It allows for the public to know what the issues are and for the Legislature to move forward and get the work done that needs to be done. This ruling if overridden will, I think, harm us and set us back in a course that will make it much more difficult with the clogging of issues. If we have to deal with them again one by one by one and take each of them, with the time that it takes, I think think we actually will frustrate us not facilitate us. So I again encourage you to not support the override of the ruling. If you don't like the amendments, vote against them, but don't do it in this fashion on the override motion. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I rise in support of the Chair's decision and will support the ruling of the Chair and vote no on the motion to override the Chair. And I understand where Senator Hudkins is coming from. And actually when she...as she reads the rules if we go technically in some...to some degree, Senator Hudkins is probably right. But the practice of the Legislature has been, over the years, and I'm not really saying we've done it this way before, we should do it now, we have found that there is a procedure that we use that actually expedites how we do things in the Legislature. I'll give you two examples of where this would be, I think, harmful if we overruled the Chair. I'm thinking of the Education Committee, for one, and the second example I'll use is the Appropriations Committee. But Education Committee, an example. If there are three bills, for example, introduced on...just to make up a subject, on the income tax rebate, and of those bills each senator has a very, very strong position. But the committee may not want to put out just one of those bills because each one has their own little flaws, and yet the introducer of the bill may not want to have any changes if the committee is going to make an amendment. It makes a lot of sense if there's a bill that, for example, the committee was going to kill on another subject, that we not kill that bill but